

Field Study in Sociology and/or Anthropology (SA)

Sociology and Anthropology 498

Section: D100

Term: 2011 Spring

Instructor: John Bogardus
Email: bogardus@sfu.ca
Office: AQ 5081

Discussion Topics: \x09Curious to apply your sociological or anthropological knowledge in a fieldwork setting?
\x09Anxious to put your passion for social change into practice?
\x09Wondering what jobs exist for SA grads?
\x09Keen to take your critical concerns out of the classroom and into the workplace and the wider community?

If one or more of these questions caught your eye, this course may offer the answer(s) you're seeking! Whether you want to investigate research topics for graduate school, check out potential career paths or pursue an interest in social problems or human culture, this field study of a non-governmental organization (NGO) or grassroots group promises to be a valuable way to explore your options while rounding off your SA undergraduate degree. While volunteer and job postings rarely say Wanted: Sociologist or Anthropologist, the variety of opportunities awaiting the transfer and application of your critical skills and sensibilities might surprise you.

NGOs and grassroots initiatives attempt to advance the interests of groups and individuals often underrepresented or marginalized within contemporary liberal democracy. Broadly united in the pursuit of social equality and social justice, the various agencies engage with a wide range of issues: community-building; international inequalities; AIDS awareness; the rights of women, Native people, immigrants, youth, the poor; and more. Organizational cultures are equally diverse, offering an array of potential workplace experiences from which to choose. Formally structured non-profit organizations such as Oxfam, Vancouver Native Health Society, Pivot Legal Society and Broadway Youth Resource Centre often supplement their core staff with unpaid help. Community-based grassroots projects -- including No One is Illegal and the Bus Riders Union among many others -- tend to be less hierarchical and primarily rely on volunteers to advance their agendas.

Fieldwork possibilities are numerous and every effort is made to secure your preferred placement prior to the beginning of the course. Your research includes an examination of your placements guiding principles and practices within the ever evolving dynamic of capitalism and democracy. This historically troubled relationship is currently dominated by a neoliberal political agenda promoting market-based solutions to human needs. Preparatory course work equips you to evaluate your agency's efforts to address the riddle of human rights through social change in this contemporary context.

An initial four-week orientation of 8 hours each week on critical social theory, participatory action research, institutional ethnography and discourse analysis provides you with the skills necessary for a successful fieldwork experience. Seminars on methods for researching organizations and for promoting liberatory social action complement workshops led by individuals active in non-profit initiatives with local, national or international mandates. The balance of the semester is spent in a one-day-a-week placement in your capacity as a volunteer, participant observer and/or researcher. Small group consultation enables you to share your findings with your class mates to better evaluate the possibilities, constraints and perils facing non-profit agencies as they pursue their objectives in our interesting times.

Grading: Annotated Bibliography\x09\x09\x09\x09\x0910%
Journal\x09\x09\x09\x09\x09\x09\x09\x09\x09\x09\x09 20%
Field Reports (Individual & Group) \x09\x09\x0930%
Field Project\x09\x09\x09\x09\x09\x09\x09\x09\x09\x09 40%

Field Study in Sociology and/or Anthropology (SA)

Grading and Academic Honesty:

All assignments in this course must be completed for a final grade to be assigned. The Department of Sociology and Anthropology follows SFU policy in relation to grading practices, grade appeals (Policy T 20.01) and academic honesty and misconduct procedures (S10.01-S10.04). It is the responsibility of students to inform themselves of the content of these policies available on the SFU website: <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/teaching/index.htm>

Required Texts: Carroll, W.K. (2004). Critical Strategies for Social Research. Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press Inc.

Additional readings available on library reserve.

Recommended Texts: None

Materials/Supplies: None

Prerequisite/Corequisite: completion of all major course requirements with the exception of SA 301 for anthropology majors and SA 350 for sociology majors, which may be taken concurrently; and by application.

Notes: Contact the course supervisor bogardus@sfu.ca to register as electronic registration is not possible for SA 498. As class size is limited, priority for enrollment may include GPA consideration.

Students registering for SA 498 will be consulted in order to secure a placement prior to the spring semester. Attendance during the first week of classes is required in order to meet the expectations for this course.

The course instructor reserves the right to check for plagiarism using software provided by the SFU administration for this purpose.

This outline is derived from a course outline repository database that was maintained by SFU Student Services and the University's IT Services Department. The database was retired in 2014 and the data migrated to SFU Archives in 2015.